

Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SAB-01 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07

NSC-05 RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 OMB-01

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, PFOR, OAS, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA JOINS IN CALL FOR OAS MEETING ON TRADE RELATIONS ACT

1. THE GOP HAS SENT TO THE PRESIDENTS OF VENEZUELA AND ECUADOR A MESSAGE--PUBLISHED IN LOCAL PRESS JANUARY 11-- EXPRESSING ITS "SOLIDARITY" WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ'S POSITION WITH REGARD TO TRA AND ITS "BELIEF" THAT THE MATTER SHOULD BE ADDRESSED BY THE OAS "SO THAT APPROPRIATE DECISIONS MAY BE

ADOPTED TO PUT AN END TO THIS SITUATION WHICH THREATENS THE SOLIDARITY AND PEACE OF THE REGION." CITING PANAMA'S "SERIOUS CONCERN" OVER THE TRA, THE GOP DOCUMENT STATES THAT THE TRADE LAW DISCRIMINATES AGAINST VENEZUELA AND ECUADOR, DISREGARDS THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO EXPLOIT THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES, CONSTITUTES PRESSURE TO PREVENT "CERTAIN STATES OF THE CONTINENT" FROM EXERCISING FULL SOVEREIGNTY OVER THEIR RESOURCES, AND REPRESENTS AN "OBVIOUS VIOLATION" OF THE PRINCIPLES PROCLAIMED BY THE OAS AND UNGA.

2. COMMENT: THE GOP STATEMENT, Milder in tone than much of the local editorial criticism of the TRA, serves
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TO PLACE PANAMA ON RECORD AGAINST "OFFENSIVE" PROVISIONS

OF THE TRA AND IN FAVOR OF VENEZUELAN CALL FOR OAS MEETING
ON THE MATTER. SIGNIFICANTLY, HOWEVER, NO MENTION WAS MADE
OF PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER BOYCOTTING MARCH MFM. WHILE
GOP MAY COME UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE FROM VENEZUELA AND
OTHERS NOT TO ATTEND, IT APPEARS PANAMA--IN VIEW OF
PROGRESS IN THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS--DOES NOT
WISH TO IRRITATE THE US BY DROPPING OUT OF MFM AT
THIS POINT. SHOULD CLEAR LATIN MAJORITY FOR BOYCOTT EMERGE
HOWEVER, GOP CAN BE EXPECTED TO GO ALONG.
JORDEN

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